

National Bank Open

Thursday, August 11, 2022

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Simona Halep

Press Conference

S. HALEP/J. Teichmann

6-2, 7-5

THE MODERATOR: Simona, great win. Can you talk us through the match.

SIMONA HALEP: Well I feel great that I can play again quarters. It's a special tournament here because I always play the good tennis.

Today was super difficult for both of us. Wind was not letting us really feeling the ball. So it was a tough one, but I'm really happy that I could stay mentally strong in the end and to finish it.

THE MODERATOR: Questions?

Q. The conditions have been quite different from when you guys have been training when it was super, super hot and then every day it's been a little bit different. Is that helpful for you as you kind of get your game prepared for the US Open or is it tricky because you're not getting consistent conditions out there?

SIMONA HALEP: No, I think every day it's really important for the US Open. Every match is important. The fact that I won three matches already, it's good.

But today it was just impossible to feel the ball. I cannot actually think about the match very well because I'm lost. I talk to her after the match and she said the same thing. It was impossible to play from one side.

But what is important is that I fought for every ball and I could win the match. So I will take the victory and I'm looking for tomorrow already.

Q. Your thoughts on facing Coco Gauff again. Someone that's had two tough matches but come away winning to get to the quarterfinals.

SIMONA HALEP: Well, she's a very tough opponent. And she's super young. She's powerful, she's strong, solid. So



it's going to be a tough match like always. We played a few times together.

It's a big challenge for me again to play quarters here in Canada. I feel confident, but I know that it's going to be tough. So tomorrow's a new day and I will fight like today for my match.

Q. You mentioned Coco being young and sometimes we can forget that she is as young as she is.

SIMONA HALEP: Because she's playing non-stop and she's winning non-stop. So that's why you don't feel like she's young anymore.

Q. That was precisely my question. I mean, what do you make of, not just her as an opponent, but how she's been able to progress from 15 years old on tour, breaking out the way that she did and seemingly putting in the hard yards. She's been kind of plugging away just like everybody else.

SIMONA HALEP: I feel she was improving so much mentally and also like as a person. She's super matured since when we play together when she was 15 in Wimbledon.

She's a great person. She's super nice. And I feel like she's going to be a Grand Slam champion soon. She has everything to do that. I feel also that she really wants it.

So she's improving a lot. I feel like every day she's improving, which is great to see.

Q. And then if I could ask you about Serena and just obviously the news with her. Just what your reaction was when you saw it. And you two have had some epic battles all over the globe in your careers. I'm curious, what are the standout moments when you think of being on tour with Serena?

SIMONA HALEP: Well, it was an honor, actually, to play so many matches against her and to share the locker room with her, to share the court.

It's always she's been an inspiration for everybody and for me too. I said this always. I admired her, you know, the



power to stay there so many years, to win so much.

And she's 40 and she's still like fighting for the match. It's unbelievable.

We're going to miss her, but I think she has many other things, important things in life to go through. So I think it's time to, yeah, it's time to stop tennis because she has a life ahead.

And she's done unbelievable things in tennis and is going to be the best for all, like forever, I think. Nobody's going to touch the level that she touched.

Q. To follow-up on that, to play in an era, especially in the middle 2010s when she was, like that 2015 season for example. And having somebody so dominant like that, not just on the court but as kind of a presence. I don't know, like what was it like for you coming up on to tour having, you know, Serena as the benchmark and then trying to catch her in a way, to try and --

SIMONA HALEP: I didn't really follow that. To catch her. Because I knew that I have no chance.

But every time I played her it was a moment that I had to learn some things. And I always was trying to take some things from her.

She's super professional, super like confident on the court. Super dominant. I think, yeah, she has so many qualities as a player.

And I remember 2013 when I played against her in semis in Rome. She killed me. But that year she didn't lose a match on clay.

So she was the only one who dominated tennis few years in a row. And I think that that's not going to happen again.

Q. How do you think she changed tennis?

SIMONA HALEP: The power, the confidence, the way of playing to stay super aggressive, to stay close to the baseline and to make so many winners. And also the serve, which was untouchable sometimes. And also the desire, the passion to win every ball.

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